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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: UNDER SECRETARY BURNS'S JULY 10 MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER TAZHIN

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a July 10 meeting in Astana, Under Secretary of State Bill Burns told Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin that the United States wants to move forward on establishing a commission to oversee bilateral relations. Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert Blake committed to following up soon. Tazhin detailed Kazakhstan's plan to provide post-secondary education to Afghan students. He said Afghanistan, frozen conflicts, and putting on a comprehensive conference on tolerance would be priorities for Kazakhstan's 2010 OSCE chairmanship. Tazhin further requested bilateral consultations on priorities in November. Admitting there was significant opposition to Russia's proposal for a European security treaty, Tazhin nevertheless argued there would be merit in bringing together the OSCE, CIS, NATO, and CSTO to discuss issues where there is common ground. He affirmed Kazakhstan's support for President Obama's new non-proliferation proposals, including a new START treaty. Tazhin would like to explore a bilateral visit to Washington by President Nazarbayev when he attends the 2010 global nuclear security summit. He asked for U.S. support for the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC), the UNODC's regional counter-narcotics organization based in Almaty, as well as for Nazarbayev's proposal that the United Nations designate August 29 as the "World Day of the Abandonment of Nuclear Weapons." END SUMMARY.

#### BILATERAL COMMISSION

¶2. (C) Tazhin recalled his May 2009 discussion with Secretary Clinton, in which both agreed that establishing a formal mechanism for bilateral cooperation would advance our partnership. Burns emphasized that we wanted to move forward quickly in doing so. Assistant Secretary Blake explained that the U.S. government was working on a proposal that envisions a bilateral commission meeting once a year to review five baskets of issues: political, security, human dimension, energy, and economics and trade. He promised that we would provide the Kazakhstani government a paper with a detailed proposal within a month.

#### AFGHANISTAN

¶3. (C) Tazhin told Burns that Kazakhstan wanted to make Afghanistan a focus of its 2010 OSCE chairmanship. He said Kazakhstan was moving

forward on establishing a special program to provide post-secondary education to 1,000 Afghan students. As a result of consultations with the Afghan government, the Kazakhstanis were tweaking the details. The Afghans have asked for additional technical specialists. Tazhin said he or Prime Minister Karim Masimov would travel to Kabul later in the year to sign a formal agreement on the program. The Kazakhstanis had discussed the program with European governments; there was interest from the European side in making it a trilateral Kazakhstan-EU-Afghanistan program down the road, should it prove successful. Tazhin hoped that the Kazakhstanis hope that Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will also agree to participate.

#### COUNTER-NARCOTICS

¶4. (C) Tazhin noted that narcotics from Afghanistan were a serious problem for Kazakhstan -- which is a transit and destination country for them. He asked for U.S. assistance in supporting the Almaty-based UNODC's Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC), explaining that the organization provides a strong platform for regional counter-narcotics cooperation.

#### NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUES

¶5. (C) Turning to non-proliferation issues, Tazhin noted that President Nazarbayev had signed legislation ratifying the extension to our bilateral Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) umbrella agreement on June 2. He asked for U.S. support for Nazarbayev's proposal that the United Nations designate August 29 to be the "World Day of the Abandonment of Nuclear Weapons." (NOTE: The former Soviet nuclear test site located near Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, was

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officially closed on August 29, 1991. END NOTE.) Tazhin said that the Kazakhstani government supports President Obama's new proposals on non-proliferation, including a new START treaty with Russia. He expressed appreciation for the U.S. government's invitation to President Nazarbayev to attend the 2010 global nuclear security summit, which was conveyed by Vice President Biden during his April 23 phone call to Nazarbayev. Tazhin said that the Kazakstanis would like to arrange for a bilateral visit to Washington for Nazarbayev in conjunction with the event.

#### OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP

¶6. (C) Tazhin said that the Kazakhstanis would like to have bilateral consultations on priorities for their OSCE chairmanship in November. One priority would be the so-called "frozen conflicts" -- Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabagh, and Transdnestria. The Kazakhstanis would like to find new monitoring mechanisms for the conflicts, especially for South Ossetia, and will raise that issue during their chairmanship. Under Secretary Burns responded that the United States and Kazakhstan should closely consult on this issue. He added that we also look forward to continuing to work closely with Kazakhstan on its Madrid commitments, so that it has tangible progress to show as it moves into its chairmanship.

¶7. (C) In a subsequent one-on-one conversation, Burns stressed to Tazhin the value for Kazakhstan of getting ahead of the curve and taking tangible steps this year, before the increased scrutiny that would come with its OSCE Chairmanship in 2010.

¶8. (C) Another chairmanship priority for Kazakhstan, Tazhin continued, was organizing a comprehensive OSCE conference on tolerance. The Kazakhstanis envision an open dialogue, with a focus on immigration to Europe from outside, integration of immigrants into European society, and tolerance. They have already engaged in discussions on the idea with ODIHR.

#### EUROPEAN SECURITY TREATY

¶9. (C) Tazhin then raised the issue of Russia's proposal for a new European security treaty. He said he recognized that there was a lot of opposition to the idea, especially among the Europeans, but argued that there would nevertheless be merit in bringing together all the relevant international organizations -- the OSCE, CIS, NATO, and CSTO

-- perhaps in enhanced working groups. Drawing on an anecdote to make his point, Tazhin said that a European colleague had told him that Europe was more secure today than at any time since the Roman Empire, to which Tazhin had responded this applied only to the European Union, not all of Europe. Tazhin admitted that there were some issues, like the conflicts in Georgia, which would not be fruitful to discuss in this context, because of Russia's opposing views. Rather, the sides should look for areas of common ground. The Kazakhstanis had discussed their views with senior EU and OSCE officials.

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